

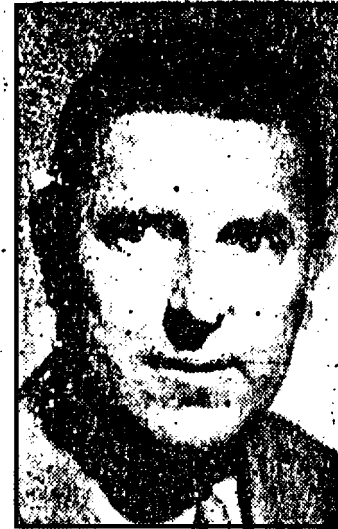
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FOIA



W. BENTON McMILLAN



F. GANO CHANCE

W. B. M'MILLAN
OF ST. LOUIS IS
BIRCH DIRECTOR

Hussmann Refrigerator
President, Centralia
(Mo.), Champaign
(Ill.) Men on Board.

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William Benton McMillan, president of Hussmann Refrigerator Co. here, was identified yesterday by Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society, as a member of the society's council, the organization's board of directors.

The John Birch Society is a national organization with headquarters in Belmont, Mass. Some members of Congress have called for an investigation of the group.

Welch told a reporter F. Gano Chance of Centralia, Mo., and Revilo P. Oliver of Champaign, Ill., are two other Midwestern members of the council. A pamphlet which lists the council members states that it is the "top governing body under the founder."

The pamphlet listing the members of the council said McMillan was the first member of the society after the founder.

McMillan confirmed that he is a member of the council and added that he has been "for several years." He told a reporter there is no St. Louis chapter of the society. He could not be reached for further comment.

Officer in N.A.M.

McMillan, 38 Brentmoor Park, Clayton, has held state and regional offices in the National Association of Manufacturers and was elected to the national board of directors of the N.A.M. in 1953.

He was co-chairman of the dinner here last month for United States Senator Barry M. Goldwater of Arizona, a leader of conservative Republicans.

Chance is president of A. B. Chance Co., manufacturer of electric transmission and distribution equipment.

He told a Post-Dispatch reporter he has been a member of the John Birch Society Council for six months and has known Welch for eight years. He said he became a member of the council because he was interested in fighting Communism.

Chance is a member of the board of the Missouri State Chamber of Commerce and of Associated Industries of Missouri. He was formerly president of the State Chamber of Commerce and is a former member of the Centralia City Council and the Board of Education at Centralia. Centralia is 125 miles west of St. Louis.

He is a former member of the board of directors of the N.A.M.

He was a member of the faculty of the School on Anti-Communism conducted in St. Louis in 1958 by Dr. Frederick Schwarz, director of the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, and is founder of the Centralia chapter of the John Birch Society.

Two More Chapters.

Interest in the society grew so rapidly since the chapter was founded last October that it was necessary to establish two more chapters, Chance related. Each chapter has 15 to 20 members.

This far the Centralia group has learned about Communism through reading and discussion and by viewing movies, including the controversial film, "Operation Abolition," Chance said.

'Do-it-Yourself' Group.

"The John Birch Society is pretty much of a 'do-it-yourself' organization," Chance said. "Individual members write letters to people or to businesses telling them they like what they are doing or they don't like it. It's up to the individual member to write letters and to say what he pleases."

"We get bulletins from the national organizations encouraging us to do this. But we are not a pressure group as an organization. Our interest is in less government and more individual responsibility. We're opposed to concentrations of power, whether it be Communism, Socialism, Nazism or Fascism. If a movement puts the power in the hands of a few, we're against it."

"We're not trying to get laws pushed through; we just don't think it's a good idea for the people to have their heads in the sand. They should know more about Communism. We welcome anyone to our organization who is interested in the welfare of our country as we see it."

Professor at Illinois U.

Oliver is professor of classical languages at the University of Illinois. He has been a member of the faculty for 21 years and is presently on sabbatical leave.

He told the Post-Dispatch he has been a member of the council since its founding in 1958. He said he became interested in "the Communist conspiracy" while doing very secret work in the War Department during World War II.

Oliver said he was in Washington during the war and became "aware of Communist activity and realized its strength."

He contended that the claim that the activities of the John Birch Society could endanger civil liberties was "part of the old Communist line." He defended Welch and the society, saying it has never engaged in excesses in any way.

The organization, he said, "is made up of dedicated, loyal Americans determined to fight the Communist conspiracy, primarily by informing ourselves and taking action." He added that the society would welcome the Congressional investigation "the Communist dupes have been helping."

Commenting on Welch, Oliver said that he regards him "as one of the finest human beings I know, a man of the utmost integrity and courage who knows more about the Communist conspiracy than anyone in the United States with the exception of J. Edgar Hoover."

Last September, Welch and Oliver were speakers at a meeting here of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons.

Welch declared that Communists have "gone more than 40 per cent of the way toward taking over the United States" and Oliver said that Communism has been sold "to extremely ignorant people who call themselves liberal intellectuals."

Robert Welch Asks Senate to Investigate Society.

BELMONT, Mass., April 1 (AP)—Robert Welch, founder of the controversial John Birch Society, disclosed today he has asked the Senate Internal Security subcommittee to investigate the organization.

Welch's secretary made public a night letter which was wired last night to Senator James O. Eastland, (Dem.), Mississippi subcommittee chairman.

In it Welch promised "none of our members will plead the Fifth Amendment" and asserted the society's "only crime" is fighting Communism.

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